

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, NATO, MNUC, NPG
SUBJECT: NPG - TNF IMPROVEMENT PAPER

REF: (A) STATE 209756 (DTG 012036Z SEP 77)
(B) USNATO 8157 (DTG 261550Z AUG 77)

1. THOUGH THE BROAD APPROACH REFLECTED IN THE DRAFT TNF PAPER (REF A) PROVIDES A USEFUL FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE TNF LONG-TERM PROGRAM, WE SEE A NEED FOR THE PROPOSED WORK PROGRAM TO BE MORE SELECTIVE, FOCUSING ON PRIORITY AREAS WE CAN ADDRESS EFFECTIVELY IN NATO. (SOME SUBJECTS, LIKE EMPLOYMENT POLICY, SHOULD BE HANDLED IN OUR VIEW ON THE INDEPENDENT PHASE III TRACK WHICH IS ALREADY ESTABLISHED.) IN OUR VIEW, SECTION V OF DRAFT -- WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE PAPER -- DOES NOT PRESENT A SUFFICIENTLY CLEAR PICTURE OF WHERE THE EXERCISE IS GOING OR HOW TO GET THERE. GRANTED, WE WANT TO WORK WITH THE ALLIES IN DESIGNING NEXT STEPS. BUT, WE BELIEVE THE US MUST TAKE THE LEAD, HAVING WEIGHED WHAT WE CAN REALISTICALLY EXPECT TO ACHIEVE IN THE TNF

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PROGRAM, AND KEEPING IN MIND THE FUNDAMENTALLY POLITICAL OBJECTIVE UNDERLYING THE INITIATIVE.

2. IN BRIEF, WE BELIEVE THE WORK PROGRAM SHOULD BE LESS PHILOSOPHICALLY ORIENTED AND SHOULD CENTER ON WHAT THE DRAFT PAPER CALLS THE "OVERALL SIZE AND MIX OF LONG-TERM THEATER NUCLEAR FORCES." THE PROGRAM AS WE ENVISION IT

WOULD FOCUS ON HARDWARE AND SUPPORTING SYSTEMS, THOUGH NOT IN THE SAME "PROGRAMMATIC" TERMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE OTHER LTDP INITIATIVES. RATHER, THE PROGRAM WOULD AIM TOWARD IDENTIFYING A BROAD OUTLINE OF ASSETS AND REQUIREMENTS, PROJECTING THE POTENTIAL TNF POSTURE OUT TO THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. THE EVENTUAL PRODUCT COULD NOT AND NEED NOT ATTEMPT TO BE COMPLETELY DEFINITIVE; IT COULD POSE ALTERNATIVES WHERE APPROPRIATE, AND REGISTER THE CAVEATS WHICH WOULD UNQUESTIONABLY BE NECESSARY. CONCEPTUAL ISSUES WOULD EMERGE, BUT THESE COULD BE DEALT WITH MORE CONSTRUCTIVELY AS DERIVATIONS OF THE LONGER TERM PROJECTION OF THE TNF POSTURE, RATHER THAN AS ABSTRACT NOTIONS, WHICH THE DRAFT PAPER SEEMS TO SUGGEST AND WHICH WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR THE ALLIES TO HANDLE. MOREOVER, CONCEPTUAL ISSUES NEED NOT BE RESOLVED, BUT COULD BE NOTED AS REFERENCE POINTS AFFECTING FUTURE DECISIONS.

3. WHAT COULD EMERGE NEXT SPRING IS A LARGELY DESCRIPTIVE PAPER TO SERVE AS A BASE POINT AND FRAMEWORK FOR DEALING WITH SPECIFIC TNF ISSUES OVER TIME IN NATO. THE PAPER COULD SERVE AS THE BASIS FOR PERPARATION OF A SUBMISSION ON TNF MODERNIZATION WHICH WOULD BE FOLDED INTO THE OVERALL LTDP REPORT FOR THE SUMMIT. THEREAFTER, WE BELIEVE THE ACTION ON TNF IMPROVEMENTS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED IN NPG CHANNELS IN ACCORDANCE WITH CUSTOMARY PRACTICE.

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4. THE MANNER IN WHICH THE TNF PROGRAM IS CARRIED OUT AFTER BARI IS AS IMPORTANT AS THE SUBSTANCE OF THE PROGRAM. THE KEY ISSUE IS HOW TO INVOLVE THE ALLIES AND THE NMA'S. WE AGREE THAT SOME ISSUES, SUCH AS CRUISE MISSILES (WHICH WE ADDRESS BELOW), MUST BE HANDLED THROUGH DISCUSSION AT HIGH LEVELS. APART FROM SUCH ISSUES, WE SEE A NEED TO ESTABLISH A WORKING GROUP MECHANISM, INVOLVING NATIONAL AND NMA REPRESENTATIVES, TO DEVELOP THE TNF PROGRAM FOR FURTHER REVIEW BY MINISTERS IN APRIL. IT WOULD BE SENSIBLE FOR THE US TO TAKE THE LEAD, DRAW ON NATIONAL AND NMA CONTRIBUTIONS, AND UTILIZE SUB-GROUPS FOR SPECIALIZED TASKS WHERE THIS WOULD BE APPROPRIATE. ALTHOUGH THE ALTERNATIVE APPROACH OF RELYING ON CIRCULATION OF NATIONAL PAPERS HAS MERIT IN TERMS OF HIGHLIGHTING NATIONAL VIEWS, THE NET OUTCOME WOULD PROBABLY BE YET ANOTHER UNILATERAL US PAPER, WITH THE ALLIES LARGELY OUT OF THE PICTURE.

5. WE NOTED, IN COMMENTING ON THE TNF INITIATIVE IN REF B, THAT IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO GIVE SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE HANDLING OF CRUISE MISSILES (CM) AND ENHANCED RADIATION REDUCED BLAST (RB) WEAPONS. ALTHOUGH SOME ALLIES MAY RENEW PRESSURES FOR A CM STUDY IN THE CONTEXT

OF THE TNF INITIATIVE, WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD HOLD TO THE PATTERN OF CONSULTATIONS ALREADY UNDERWAY, CENTERING ON A CONTINUING EXCHANGE OF VIEWS, IN LIEU OF A STUDY, IN APPROPRIATE FORA. WHILE PRESERVING DIRECT REFERENCE TO CM IN THE OUTLINE PAPER, WE SHOULD ESTABLISH AN EARLY UNDERSTANDING WITH THE ALLIES THAT AN APPROPRIATE SECTION ON CRUISE MISSILES MIGHT BE FOLDED INTO THE TNF PROGRAM AS IT EMERGES NEXT SPRING, REFLECTING THE STATUS OF NAC/NPG MINISTERIAL DISCUSSION AT THAT TIME. BY THIS APPROACH, WE WOULD COVER CM IN THE TNF PROGRAM, BUT IN EFFECT BRACKET

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IT FOR SPECIAL HANDLING.

6. HANDLING THE RB ISSUE WILL DEPEND ON THE OUTCOME OF SEPARATE BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL CONSULTATIONS, AND ON THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION ON PRODUCTION. RB IS SCATTERED THROUGH THE OUTLINE PAPER, AND COULD BENEFIT FROM CONSOLIDATION, COUPLED WITH APPROPRIATE CAVEATS THAT THE ISSUE IS CONTINGENT ON PRESIDENTIAL DECISIONS. IF THE PRESIDENT DECIDES IN FAVOR OF PRODUCTION, WE SEE THE TNF INITIATIVE AS THE IDEAL FRAMEWORK TO FURTHER ADDRESS THIS SUBJECT, SINCE RB WEAPONS COULD BE PLACED IN PERSPECTIVE WITH OVERALL TNF IMPROVEMENTS, WHILE BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS ON DEPLOYMENT COULD PROCEED IN PARALLEL.

7. APART FROM THE GENERAL COMMENTS ABOVE, THE DRAFT

OUTLINE PAPER NEEDS SOME EDITING FOR TONE AND SUBSTANCE
TO MAKE IT MORE SUITABLE FOR A NATO AUDIENCE. WE ARE
SENDING SPECIFIC COMMENTS BY SEPTTEL. BENNETT

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